

Newtown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Queen's Road, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 1JD

Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of significant change. Some classes have experienced numerous changes of teacher. This has affected teaching, learning and current pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always make full use of assessment information, taking into account what pupils already know, understand and can do.
- Senior leaders are supporting teachers to implement necessary new strategies. However, the rapid pace of improvement has not given time for these strategies to become embedded.
- Until recently, teachers' assessment information was not consistently accurate. Current pupils have not been supported over time to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' understanding of phonics has declined, which impact on their early reading. Across the school, pupils make less progress in mathematics than in reading and writing.
- Pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities are nurtured well. However, teachers do not adapt learning sufficiently for this group of pupils to make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Although interim, the current headteacher is galvanising the enthusiastic support of staff, parents and pupils to turn the school around. Senior and middle leaders, and governors, are passionate about improving the school.
- Parents and staff recognise that the headteacher has led effective improvement strategies to ensure that pupils feel safe.
- Leaders' actions are beginning to raise standards across the school.
- The profile of teaching is becoming stronger through leaders' support and training. They are making effective staff appointments.
- Parents appreciate the recent changes made in the Reception classes. Children are catching up rapidly because teaching meets their needs.
- Pupils like the many improvements that have been made during the past year. Their attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour is typically good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning across the school so that it is at least good by:
 - enabling teachers to use assessment information effectively to plan work that is at the right level of challenge for individual pupils, particularly for the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that teachers embed the school's improved strategies in their practice
 - enhancing communication with parents so that they are fully informed about the academic progress their children are making.
- Accelerate the progress of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, by:
 - ensuring that teachers increase the opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics to secure and deepen pupils' understanding
 - improving pupils' phonics skills and developing their fluency in reading
 - having high expectations for pupils to use their writing skills effectively in all of their written work
 - ensuring that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The vast majority of parents and staff who communicated with inspectors during the inspection support the current headteacher. They can see how quickly the school is improving as a result of senior leaders' relentless work to bring about the necessary improvements to pupils' behaviour and safety. Having improved the conditions for learning, senior leaders are now able to target their energies on improving teaching, learning and assessment, and on pupils' outcomes.
- Parents appreciate the school's many improvements. One parent summed this up for many by saying: 'The headteacher and her team have done an amazing job to turn the school around... They are out on the gates every morning, which is great,' adding that, '(My children) are thriving at the school... any issues I have are dealt with quickly and efficiently.' However, not all parents are as positive. A common theme among those who spoke to inspectors and/or responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, was that the school's communication needs to improve, particularly around giving parents information about their children's progress. A minority of parents expressed their concerns about the management of pupils' behaviour at the start of the year.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They take robust action to improve teaching and learning. Teaching staff value the professional culture that now pervades the school. They say that they are becoming more effective in the classroom as a result of the support and training they receive.
- During the autumn term 2016, senior leaders quickly recognised the difficulties caused by inconsistencies in teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment. They rightly identified that this needed to be a school improvement priority. Accurate assessment of pupils' learning is now being used to inform teaching and learning.
- Middle leaders are new into post. They are enthusiastic and passionate to improve the school. They have already made improvements by ensuring that teaching and learning is well planned and that pupils have ready access to the resources they need to support their understanding. Middle leaders are acutely aware that the improvements they have recently introduced need to become embedded in all classrooms.
- Leaders wisely use the local authority's effective support to develop their own expertise, and that of other staff. For example, a consultant headteacher offered strategic support at a key time. Other support assisted leaders to develop teachers' skills to assess pupils' learning accurately. Support from a local teaching alliance continues to build strengths in the wider staff team. Governors and leaders are recruiting strategically to ensure that the school has a skilful teaching staff to develop the school's own capacity and resources for improvement.
- The curriculum has recently been revised to ensure that it has many more interesting 'hooks' to engage pupils. The newly developed planning is supporting teachers to develop breadth and depth of learning across the different subjects. The curriculum offers meaningful opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. For example, Year 6 pupils engaged in a philosophical discussion

about whether they believe in life after death. They gave intelligent reasons and thoughtfully considered those views that were different to their own. Pupils have relatively few opportunities to develop a depth of understanding of cultural and religious differences.

- Through the curriculum, pupils develop an appreciation of life in modern Britain. They learn about democracy through the work of the school council. Teachers actively promote respect and tolerance of difference, as well as the importance of keeping to rules.
- Pupils appreciate the school's extra-curricular provision, such as sports clubs led by external providers, the choir, and a breakfast and after-school club. They like having visitors to the school and enjoy local fieldwork visits, such as to the nearby beach. They have opportunities for visits beyond the local area, and special days to enrich their learning, such as a recent Year 5 day experiencing activities relevant to life in Ancient Greece.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport premium effectively, to ensure that pupils maintain regular activity. The funding provides sports coaches to give specialist tuition for pupils, and training for staff. The training is enabling teachers confidently to support pupils' physical development.
- Additional monies, including that provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are used to fund extra teaching support, either in class or within a small group, working in one of the learning pods. Leaders say that this provision will have further impact once the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently strong. They have identified the need to use the pupil premium to fund more precise interventions, so that disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress in their learning. For example, a revised strategy for the next academic year is targeted at improving the attendance of this group of pupils.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been instrumental in generating rapid change at the school in response to well-founded concerns. The chair of governors, in particular, has acted bravely and decisively to improve the quality of senior leadership. Governors have worked closely with the local authority to support necessary changes. Consequently, governors have overseen a shift in the school's ethos to one of greater care, support and safety.
- The governing body is determined that the school will continue to improve, to benefit its pupils and the parent community. Consequently, they are well informed about all aspects of leaders' work to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They check how these are being implemented. They understand that until very recently improvement actions had been largely reactive. Governors sensibly recognise that the recent positive changes are not yet embedded across the school.
- Individual governors are not afraid to challenge leaders, when necessary, both in meetings and when they make visits to the school as individuals, to review the impact of leaders' actions. Governors also provide leaders with appropriate support and encouragement.

- The governing body keeps a careful eye on pupils' attainment information but does not have a sufficient overview of the progress made by different pupil groups and cohorts. This prevents them from being fully involved in effective evaluation of the impact of school improvement actions, and development planning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have made the improvement of the safeguarding arrangement for pupils a priority. Leaders who have designated safeguarding roles carry out their responsibilities well. Staff communicate effectively with each other. There are clear safeguarding processes, and records are appropriately maintained. A designated safeguarding lead is always available in school to make referrals to other agencies, in a timely manner, and to follow these up, as needed.
- Clear and appropriate measures are in place to ensure that leaders check the suitability of staff on appointment to the school. All staff and governors have received comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding and child protection training. The designated safeguarding lead professionals ensure that staff receive weekly updates and reminders.
- Current school leaders have improved the safety of the site. School procedures have been enhanced to ensure high levels of supervision of pupils at all times of the school day.
- Almost all parents who communicated with inspectors, say that their children feel safe in school, and pupils confirmed this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although it has improved over time, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across subjects and year groups. Many classes have experienced changes of teacher during the academic year. These changes have had an impact on the progressive building of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Some of the initiatives to improve teaching and learning are very recent, and are not yet embedded in all classrooms. For example, training in the use of practical apparatus to support pupils' understanding of new mathematical concepts took place only a matter of a few weeks prior to the inspection.
- Teaching typically focuses on the expected attainment the school has identified for the year group, without routinely taking account of what pupils already know, understand and can do. Consequently, tasks are not matched precisely enough to pupils' different abilities and starting points.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they need to do in order to improve their work, nor do they consistently make use of the feedback that teachers provide, for example, in mathematics and in writing. Improvements to the curriculum give pupils opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects, although leaders are aware that pupils' writing is not consistent across all of their written work. In mathematics, leaders

know that pupils currently have too few opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving.

- Pupils who are disadvantaged make similar progress to their peers with the same starting points. However, teachers do not check carefully enough that pupils for whom the school receives additional funding are challenged to achieve their very best.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in class, but their needs are not met through well-matched tasks that build upon prior learning. For example, in a guided reading session, the teacher supported two pupils with a reading task based on the pupils' chosen non-fiction book. Pupils could not access the text because it was too difficult for them. Consequently, the activity did not enable the pupils to make progress in reading. Similarly, pupils with low prior attainment are not always provided with tasks that are appropriate to their needs.
- A minority of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress. This was a particular concern for parents of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers are supported to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in their class through the regular meetings they have with senior leaders. In the best teaching observed, teachers use assessment information to plan teaching and learning from what pupils can already do. This is particularly the case in Year 1, where teaching is now plugging gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge.
- Teachers plan lessons thoughtfully to provide pupils with a wide range of interesting opportunities. They make lessons active and promote collaboration to help pupils to articulate their ideas clearly. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson groups of pupils first predicted, and then explored, whether a set of substances would dissolve.
- In the most effective teaching, adults' questioning extends pupils' thinking and learning. Pupils enjoy being challenged by their learning and especially like being treated as 'experts'. Key stage 1 pupils were seen to concentrate hard, to express their ideas in writing and to develop independence.
- Teaching effectively promotes pupils' understanding of equalities, enabling them to respect and celebrate difference. Pupils with disabilities are valued as individuals and thoughtfully supported by their peers.
- Leaders are acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the school and provide tailored support for teaching staff. This is having an impact, and is improving the quality of provision. Teachers and other adults are responding positively to what is being put in place by leaders. They appreciate the way in which their professional skills are being developed.
- Leaders and governors are aware of parents' concerns about how unsettled pupils' learning has been in some classes in the school's recent past. Leaders are wisely taking action to ensure that pupils' transition into new year groups will be as seamless as possible.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are happy at school and proud of the way in which their school community is improving. They are respectful of one another, and older pupils work cooperatively with staff to create an inclusive and safe school. For example, pupils enjoy being given responsibilities during lunchtimes, such as by being office juniors, or lunch helpers supporting pupils to keep to routines and play safely.
- Teachers recognise pupils who demonstrate the positive learning values, which the school has recently introduced. Having recognition for making these good choices raises pupils' self-esteem and develops their confidence.
- Pupils say there is very little bullying at school, that it is easy to report any incident to a member of staff and that it will be dealt with quickly. They understand about the different forms of bullying, such as racism. Pupils like having a worry box in each classroom where they can communicate anxieties, however small. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that they are on hand to listen to any parents' or pupils' concerns at the start and end of the day.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves fit, healthy and safe. They can describe the ways in which they can keep themselves safe when online, and they learn about the potential dangers of social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school is orderly, both in classrooms, corridors and outside. Pupils are polite and friendly. Inspectors observed pupils having typically positive attitudes towards their learning. They work hard in their lessons and are keen to make progress.
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes are purposeful times of the day and pupils clearly enjoy them. At break, almost all teaching staff provide an interesting activity in which pupils can choose to engage. The lunchtime staff do the same, giving access to an even wider range of activities. Pupils are free to enjoy time in a quiet area or to devise their own play using the range of materials that are available. As one pupil said about the lunch break, 'There is so much to do. It's exciting.'
- Staff carefully report all behaviour incidents. This information is collated by leaders, not only to ensure that there is effective follow up to avoid recurrence, but also to analyse carefully so that further improvements can be made.
- Leaders have developed staff expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. This is because there are a few pupils whose behaviour presents a high level of challenge. The needs of these pupils are carefully identified so that staff understand how to manage them successfully.
- During the spring term, the school developed a resource, 'The Lodge', where pupils can

be referred for specific support, with their parents' agreement. This additional resource has quickly become an integral part of the school. Its contribution is viewed positively by pupils who admire the way in which it supports pupils to 'self-regulate' their behaviour, which is one of the school's learning values. As a result of leaders enhancing the provision for pupils with a high level of need, the number of behaviour incidents and fixed-term exclusions is declining.

- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. School staff rigorously follow up absences using a stepped procedure. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have higher levels of absence, and persistent absence, than other pupils, although the difference is diminishing. The home-school link worker is effective in engaging families who require extra support to ensure that their children have good attendance.
- While pupils listen attentively to teachers and to each other, some of the newer teachers to the school continue to work hard to manage smooth transitions between activities in lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Current pupils' outcomes are variable across classes, year groups and groups of pupils. This is because there have been too many inconsistencies in the quality of teaching during the past academic year. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have therefore been variable. Strategies to improve teaching and learning are too new to have had an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Although school leaders review the progress that individual pupils make, they do not yet have a comprehensive overview of the progress made by different groups of pupils. This is because assessment has only recently been validated as accurate.
- Evidence in pupils' books and the school's assessment information shows that, since spring 2017, most current pupils are making strong progress in reading and writing. However, progress in mathematics is slower in some classes than others.
- The academic needs of some groups of pupils are not met carefully enough. This is particularly noticeable for pupils with low prior-attainment, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. While some high prior-attaining pupils are working at a greater depth of understanding, the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not consistently challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils' workbooks show that disadvantaged pupils achieve equally as well as other pupils in the school with the same prior-attainment.
- Since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has declined. This has affected some pupils' reading fluency. Very recent improvements to the teaching of phonics are ensuring that current pupils quickly catch up. The school's current tracking information shows that in key stage 1, fewer pupils this year are on track to reach the standard expected for their age compared to the 2016 outcomes for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The writing of current Year 6 pupils shows an improvement in their grammar and spelling. The use of challenging class fiction to support reading comprehension has

supported pupils to make ambitious vocabulary choices.

- In 2016, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was in line with the national average in reading, below in mathematics and significantly higher in writing. The school's current performance information shows that in mathematics a higher proportion of pupils than in 2016 are currently on track to reach the standard expected for their age. Current assessment information suggests pupils' outcomes in reading match those in writing.
- Improvements to teaching, learning and assessment now place equal importance on outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, Year 6 pupils are being increasingly well prepared for their secondary education.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in Reception at levels below those typical for their age. In the early part of the current academic year, children made slow progress. However, under new leadership, children are now making rapid progress from their starting points. Parents who spoke to inspectors at the gate, and those responding to Ofsted's online survey, indicated strong support for the changes in Reception, and praised the visible improvements in their children's learning and well-being.
- Teachers are highly skilled in understanding and meeting children's needs. They know the children very well. The adults work collaboratively with each other, and also with parents, to ensure that children make strong progress across all areas of learning.
- The environment is stimulating, both indoors and outdoors. It promotes children's learning through play and discovery. They demonstrate curiosity, use equipment sensibly, know routines and persist at tasks. Children know how to play safely and to look after each other, especially when they are exploring in the outdoor area.
- Children enjoy developing their creative skills in the role-play areas and through small-world play, and their physical skills on the large apparatus. Adults ensure children's rapid progress to overcome the impact of the slow start to the year. They use every opportunity to extend children's understanding of phonics, reading, writing and number.
- Adults are on hand to encourage children right from the start of the day. Children settle quickly to interesting learning tasks. During the inspection, children's learning activities followed up their recent visit to Manor Farm. When working with adults, children practised saying and writing some sentences about their visit. They were well motivated and completed their writing task to an impressive standard. Children were justifiably proud of their success.
- Children who are disadvantaged make good progress because their teachers know them as individuals and skilfully address their barriers to learning. In particular, adults help children to develop communication, language and literacy skills. Adults are aware of the catch-up that many Reception children need to make. They use every opportunity to support children to practise and correctly apply phonic sounds as they support child-initiated learning.
- Leaders are aware that children's outcomes at the end of the Reception year have

been compromised by the slow start that children initially made when they started school. However, the Reception teachers are supporting a smooth transition into Year 1, which they plan to oversee, so that children's learning will be continuous.

School details

Unique reference number	116336
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10032849

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	four to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Cane
Headteacher	Emma Lee
Telephone number	02392 584 048
Website	www.newtownceprimary.co.uk
Email address	e.lee@newtown.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools, with two classes in each year group.
- Very shortly after the previous inspection, a new chair of governors was appointed. There have been a number of other changes of governing body members.
- The previous headteacher left the school during the 2016/2017 academic year. The deputy headteacher has led the school since November 2016, in an acting capacity. Other senior leaders have been appointed to the school during the current academic year. Governors are currently recruiting for the headteacher post.
- There have been a number of other recent staff changes. The considerable change in staffing and leadership has created some turbulence for the school.
- Most pupils who attend the school are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than that found in primary schools

nationally.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to other primary schools.
- The school's pupil population is more stable than that experienced by other primary schools.
- During the current academic year, the school has been supported by the Pioneer Teaching Alliance.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards that set out the minimum expectations for primary schools.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, and undertook four focused learning walks to pursue particular enquiries. In each of these walks, inspectors made short visits to every classroom. In all, 28 lessons were visited. Almost all of the visits were carried out with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at transition times, during breaktimes and lunchtimes and visited the after-school clubs.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, and with a representative group of teachers and teaching support staff.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the school's published information for 2015 and 2016 (since the previous inspection) and the information on its website. They examined a wide range of school documents, including: information relating to safeguarding and attendance; school improvement, evaluation and planning; and minutes of governors' meetings. Inspectors reviewed the school's assessment information on the progress and attainment of pupils, and groups of pupils. They scrutinised a sample of pupils' books in English and mathematics and examined pupils' workbooks when in classrooms.
- Inspectors heard pupils read in key stages 1 and 2 and observed phonics in Year 1.
- To gain their views of the school, inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and met pupils outside of the classroom.
- In addition to speaking to a number of parents, inspectors considered 51 responses to the Parent View questionnaire, together with 39 written comments from parents, and a letter sent to the lead inspector at the start of the inspection. They considered 32 staff survey responses.

Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Orme	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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